

CATALYST

China: A World in a Country



Spring 2023

The Editors' Foreword

Sophia and I are very proud to announce the publication of the Academic Ambassadors' journal Catalyst. This year's edition of Catalyst is entitled 'China: A World in a Country' and seeks to explore China as a global power and its intricacies as a cultural microcosm.

In a time where culture is becoming increasingly homogenised, we recognised the importance of examining and appreciating a culture which is radically different from our own. This has only been amplified by social media, and so we wanted to promote the enrichment and celebration of life that is very different from our 'Western' perspective. We hope, through a selection of a myriad of topics, to offer wide-ranging insight into this different and vibrant world. This is also important because, in a time where causing 'offence' is increasingly criticised and disagreements could lead to getting 'cancelled', it is even more integral to embrace difference and to inhale the distinctive and beautiful discrepancies within the world; this is something which is as equally valued at FHS.

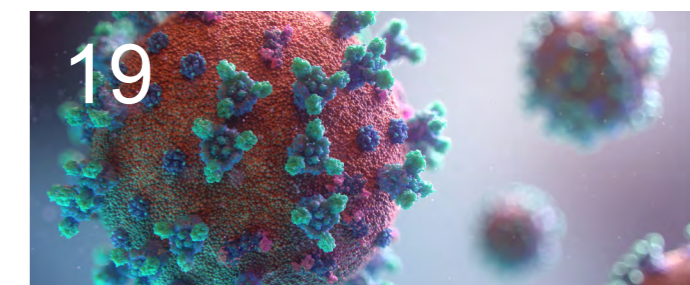
Catalyst is an ultimate representation of the creativity and curiosity encouraged at FHS. We know how vital it is to inspire others to think beyond our daily lives and routines in order to appreciate the immense differences between societies, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Catalyst should be informative and share an array of ideas, as well as depict the innovation and imagination of students.

We hope you enjoy reading The Catalyst as much as we did whilst putting it together.

MAIRI STEWART AND SOPHIA EFTHIMIOU
Co-editors of Catalyst



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China's Role in Fast Fashion

BY ANNABEL KIKANO, MIA EFTHIMIOU AND TALITHA KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH
EDITED BY SKYE OWEN

Fast fashion is defined as 'inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers', and is estimated to be worth around 133 billion US dollars (Statista).

China plays a large role in this booming industry due to its large population and vast number of skilled factory workers. This has provided the country with economic benefits as well as international trade links. Despite helping to increase employment levels and provide the growing middle class with more disposable income in China, the industry comes with many devastating long-term, global effects for the workers and the environment.

Firstly, fast fashion employs a significant number of workers. Around 83 million

people in China work in factories, approximately 1 in 17 Chinese adults. Moreover, the majority of fast fashion workers in China work 60-70 hours a week, excluding overtime (which is often made compulsory if garments are not completed). This gives workers a salary of 2,150 Chinese Yuan which is equivalent to £269 a week. The low minimum wage leaves workers with a poor quality of life, heightened by the long hours and poor, unsanitary working conditions within factories.

One of the most detrimental consequences of fast fashion is the impact on the environment. During the manufacturing of garments, cheap and toxic textiles are used alongside large quantities of water and energy. For example, around 2,700

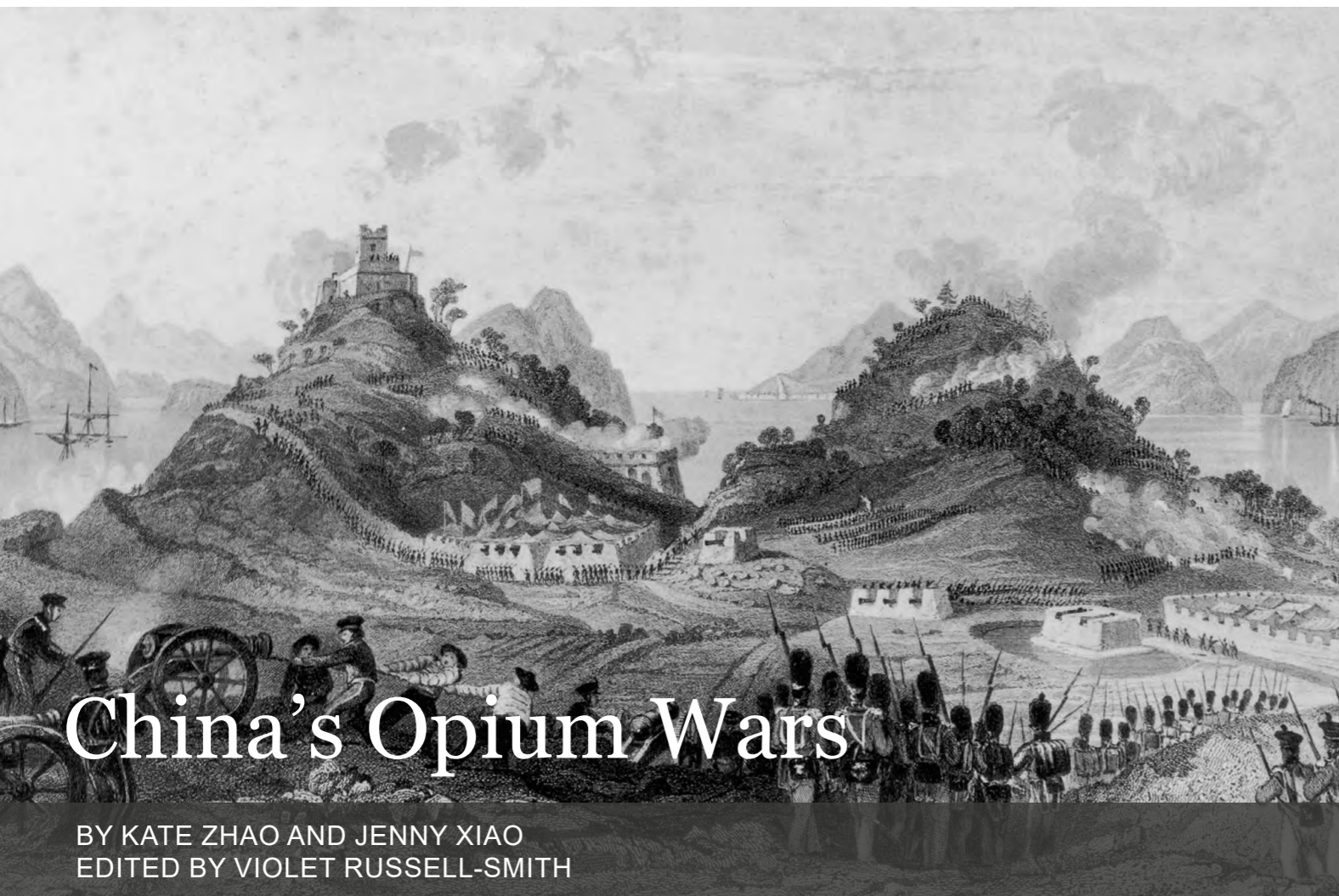
litres of water is required to make a single t-shirt, highlighting the vast amount of natural, non-renewable resources this industry uses. This process contributes to water and air pollution, which leads to the depletion of ecosystems, causing wildlife loss. Furthermore, the exposure to harmful molecules, such as lead and silica, can have negative impacts on the elderly and asthmatic, potentially leading to serious health risks such as dermatitis. Again, fast fashion is responsible for 10% of carbon emissions and 20% of water pollution due to the large amounts of CO2 machinery releases contributing to global warming.

Brands such as Shein, Topshop, Urban Outfitters and Uniqlo are examples of TNCS that work with China to provide clothes on an international scale. Even though these transnational corporations may seem economically beneficial as they provide employment, often profits are leaked back to the brand's headquarters overseas.

Fast fashion employees are also paid low wages for hours of strenuous labour, with Borgen Magazine describing how this 'phenomenon' has become known as 'the race to the bottom', indicating the damaging effects China has on the globe. However, who do we blame for this crippling issue? On the one hand, consumers are demanding for more produce, placing immense pressure on clothing establishments to keep up with fast fashion trends at the lowest cost possible. Although these low prices and quick turnaround of clothing may be positive for the consumer, the low prices have an underlying issue. To sustain these low prices, the factory employees are barely paid minimum wage. As a result, some argue how fashion companies should take responsibility and ensure their clothes are being made both ethically and sustainably.

To conclude, not only does China's growing population endure these horrifying working conditions, they must also sacrifice their health and well-being for minimum wage. The amount of pressure inflicted upon the employees to produce a certain amount of clothing is extremely disheartening, especially considering China's high gross national income (27.07 trillion PPP dollars in 2021). Overall, despite the fast fashion world bringing economic benefits to China, they do not outweigh the long-term environmental and social issues, which the country should strive to fix.





China's Opium Wars

BY KATE ZHAO AND JENNY XIAO
EDITED BY VIOLET RUSSELL-SMITH

The Opium Wars were a conflict between China and Britain, which lasted between 1839 and 1860. Opium is made from the sap of poppies and was initially used as medicine. As an addictive drug, it was later traded with China to acquire goods like tea, porcelain and silk, popular in Britain. The drug was easily purchased as the monopoly over the product by the East India Company was broken, which lowered the price and increased access to the drug. The causes of the Opium Wars were political, economic, and cultural, involving misunderstanding and trade imbalance between the two countries. As a result, two wars broke out: the first Opium War from 1839-42, and the second from 1856-60, in which France also joined, assisting Britain. Each war was easily won by

Britain and a large compensation of £60,000 was paid by China. Hong Kong was ceded to Britain and open trade with China was maintained.

The opium pipe, which was first used to smoke the narcotic, was a much more contemporary and significantly riskier habit that emerged in the sixteenth century. Emperor Jiaqing outlawed the sale and consumption of opium in 1729 as a result of the major problem that opium smoking had become in China. The addictive nature of the drug had damaged the efficiency of the country as people had lost their willpower. A large number of students, soldiers and government officials were still consuming it. The drug's prohibition had little effect as it

was being smuggled in (there were around 100 Chinese smuggling boats), resulting in Emperor Jiaqing calling a meeting with his officials. There were two sides to the meeting: one side suggested to legalise opium but place a large amount of tax on the drug, whilst the other side believed they should solve the problem from the root and eliminate the drug altogether.

The leading politician on the moral side was Lin Zexu, who was given permission from the Emperor to clamp down on opium. He placed measures to control drug use among Chinese people, arranging treatment for addicts, punishing drug dealers (1,600 Chinese dealer arrested), ordering the destruction of opium and pipes, as well as demanding traders to turn over drugs in exchange for tea. The trigger to the war occurred when Lin Zexu seized 1,400 tonnes of opium, tossing it into the water. Beginning 3rd June 1839, opium was mixed with salt and lime and dumped into the sea. The destruction of opium increased tension and affected British dignity, as well as reducing profit from the opium trade. On 4th September 1839, British ships fired shots at Chinese boats in retaliation for their food embargo on the province. The first armed confrontation of the war occurred here, known as the Battle of Kowloon. Shortly after, in 1840, war was declared by Lord Palmerston, the British prime minister, as the loss of profit from the trade of opium was devastating. The decision was made after a vote held on the 7th of April questioned if Britain should go to war. The side supporting war won with 271 votes, only 9 votes ahead from those against.

After the Opium Wars, the British government gained control of Hong Kong as a result of the Treaty of Nanking, with Hong Kong becoming a British colony until 1st July 1997. Hong Kong changed



politically as a colony of the Crown, with a new political system being introduced, changing Hong Kong from an integrated bureaucracy to a (personal) democracy under the governor, who was elected by the monarch to represent the Crown. The Legislative Council and Executive Council were further set up by members chosen by the governor, therefore, the future of Hong Kong was decided by Britain. Under the British, Hong Kong's economy grew rapidly as an international trade centre, providing shipping, maintenance, construction, and financial and commercial activities. These activities allowed the colony to reach \$4,776 million per capita in 1966. The social impact of being a colony of the Crown varied depending on whether one were a foreigner or Chinese. Foreigners were given benefits, seen during the Third Plague Pandemic where the Peak District Reservation Ordinance reserved the high-altitude Victoria Peak for non-Chinese residence as the plague was most common in low level areas, where there was an accumulation of waste. Other discriminative policies were enforced, including the Light and Pass Ordinance, where only Chinese residents were required to carry lanterns and a

written pass at night. The border between Mainland China and Hong Kong was also strongly restricted, preventing people from the mainland from entering. Police stopped over 2 million citizens, requiring people to show their identity cards to prevent any immigrants from entering.

In the first Opium War, on the condition that the Chinese would pay £60,000 in reparations, the British withdrew. Charles Elliott initially mediated the agreement, but Lord Palmerston removed him, believing Elliott had not secured enough agreements. Sir Henry Pottinger, who succeeded him, demanded the opening of further ports to foreign trade, the formation of diplomatic ties, and compensation for both the opium that had been seized and the war's expenditures. The agreement, therefore, stated that China would compensate Britain for the destroyed opium with a payment of \$21 million, of which 6 million would be paid immediately and the remainder in subsequent instalments. For the second Opium War in 1860, China was made to pay an increased compensation of 8 million taels of silver to both Britain and France each.

Britain's main interest in gaining Hong Kong was the large possibility to expand trade and make Hong Kong an international trading centre to develop the British economy. Hong Kong's location by the sea allowed the British Royal Navy to be situated there, creating a military base. This base gave Britain more control over their colonies, as well as efficient transportation and development of trade by opening trade with the USA. Having a port in Eastern Asia allowed Britain to have stronger control over the Asia market, as well as enhancing their trade with China to create free trade alongside the legalisation of the sale of opium.

To conclude, the Opium Wars were mainly influenced by trade, but also acted as a catalyst for the development of British control in the East. The wars created a pathway for military control in Asia, growth in the economy due to trade, and the shaping of present Hong Kong as a place under two systems. Overall, the wars were one-sided victories, solely benefiting Britain.

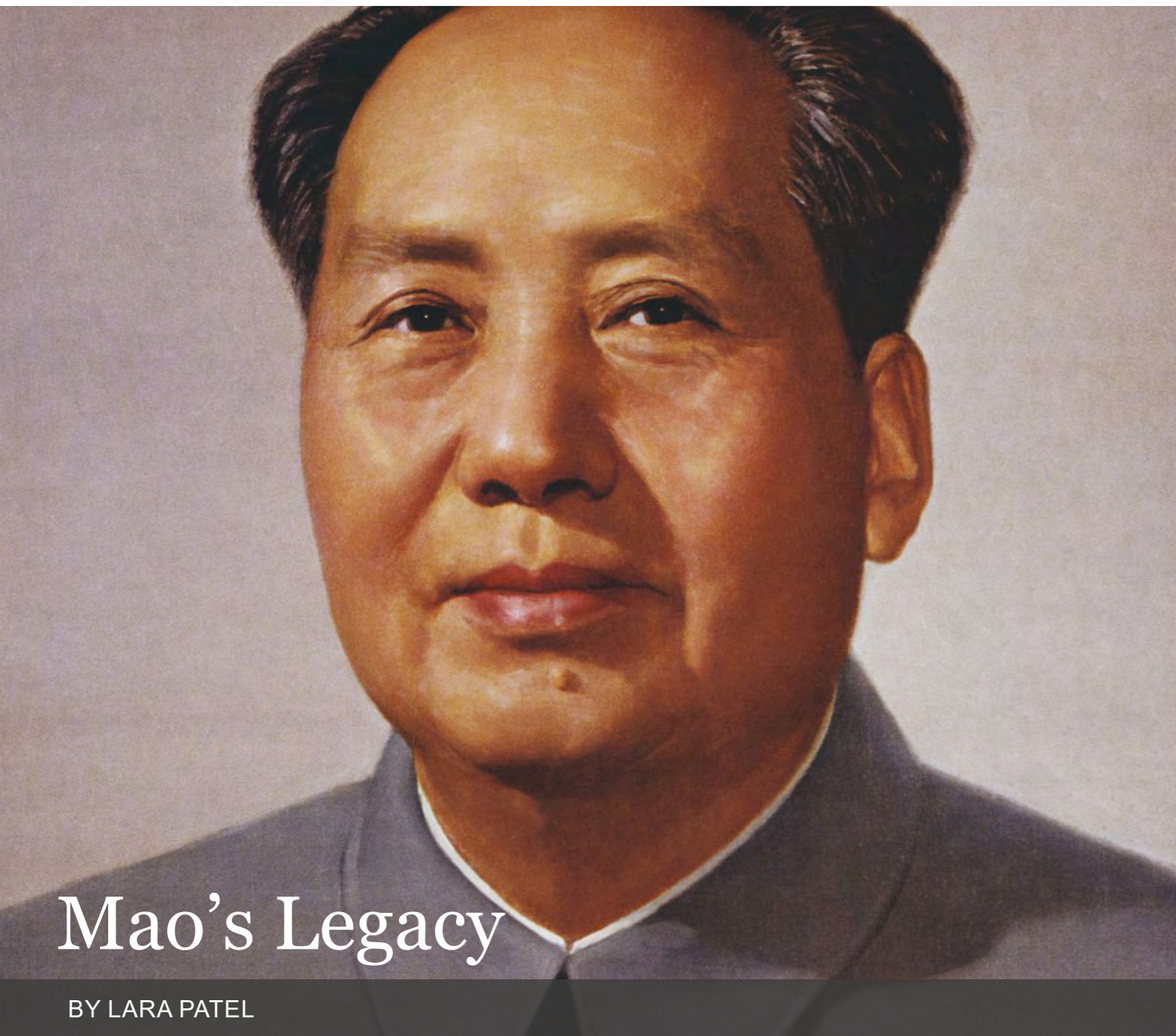


Presentation on Chinese Cuisine [Click to Read](#)

BY EMILY PARKER



Letters from World Leaders to Year 4 [Click to Read](#)



Mao's Legacy

BY LARA PATEL

Throughout the many rulers that China has had, one could argue that their most accomplished leader came after their least successful leader. China is recognised as an influential part of society, contributing to several resources that we use in our daily lives. Today, we look at China as a successful country in which we are dependent on. However, China was not always like this. China used to be a poor country in

which people were paid an unsustainable salary to produce the resources we are dependent on today. China was an unstable, unaccomplished country, retaining very little tourism and a place where religious communities were not accepted, with some even being killed. Leaders Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping are important figures in Chinese history, whose reigns we will look at more closely in this article.

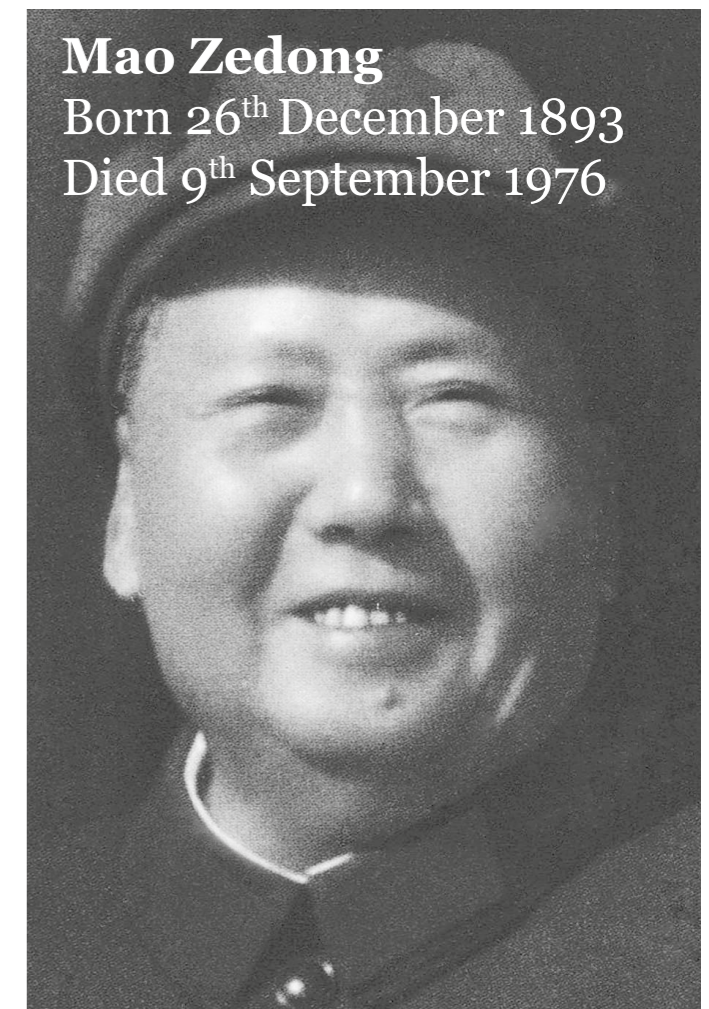
Mao Zedong was a Chinese communist leader, who raised many economic campaigns to reduce poverty, increase tourism and modernise China. However, according to historians, all of these campaigns failed and resulted in China becoming a less financially stable country than before. One of the great periods Mao led China through was "The Great Leap Forward", which was a five-year economic plan supported by the Chinese Communist Party. The goal of the plan was to improve China's agricultural problems, as well as revolutionise the nation. Whilst the plan was initially a great idea, more than 10 million peasants were forced to work in mines to dig for iron and limestone during this revolution. Many peasants died as a result from forced labour. Millions of peasants were forced to work on farms to produce food, but many died of starvation due to natural disasters ruining crops.

Another plan of Mao's was the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution", which aimed to restore capitalism in China. This revolution was based on destroying the 'old China' in order to re-create a 'new China'. This movement destroyed China's heritage and religious communities, such as Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, as Mao tried to destroy the 'old China'. People were encouraged to destroy churches, libraries, universities and shops as Mao thought they represented the wrong ideas. Millions of people were killed during this period and religious activity was highly restricted.

Even though Mao was responsible for the deaths of millions of people, it remains interesting that he is still one of the most praised leaders in China. Mao is celebrated for destroying the 'old China' and evolving the nation into a developed, modern country, the one we know today. However, his reputation outside of China

is unfavourable, particularly considering the large number of human rights abuses that he is responsible for. As such, Mao's popularity is controversial, with people in China believing Mao to be one of the best leaders, whilst others disagree. Overall, Mao succeeded in his goal of destroying the 'old China' in hopes of paving the way for a new, modernized China to develop.

Mao Zedong
Born 26th December 1893
Died 9th September 1976



Chinese Medicine

An Introduction to Chinese Medicine:

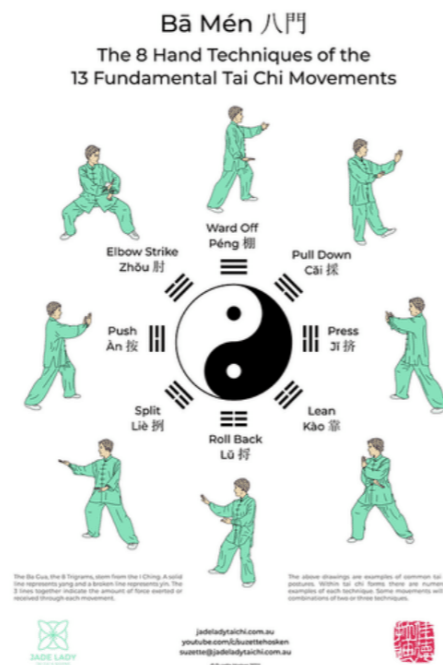
Traditional Chinese medicine has evolved over thousands of years, and it started in the early Zhou Dynasty of China. Practitioners use different approaches like psychological and physical, such as acupuncture, tai chi, reflexology as well herbal products that address different health problems. Chinese medicine helps improve the quality of life and certain pain conditions in a natural way. 'Shennong' is the man that is thought to be the original founder of Chinese medicine. We are going to investigate a few of the most popular Chinese methods of healing.

Acupuncture:

Acupuncture is one of the main Chinese medicines used today. It is very popular because it is thought to restore the central nervous system. It involves the insertion of extremely thin needles through your skin at specific points on your body. These specific points are thought to help your body with chronic pain, migraines and headaches as well as other issues. It is a flexible form of treatment that can target numerous different health concerns all at once. Furthermore, it is thought to assist low back pain, neck pain, osteoarthritis, knee pain, and fatigue.

Tai Chi:

Tai Chi combines certain postures, gentle movements, mental focus, breathing and relaxation. People find that it helps to improve your balance and stability in older people. For example, it reduces pain from knee osteoarthritis and improves people's mood. It is an ancient traditional Chinese method of self-development. It is also a blend of medical meditative and martial knowledge of self-discipline with graceful movements with effortless power.



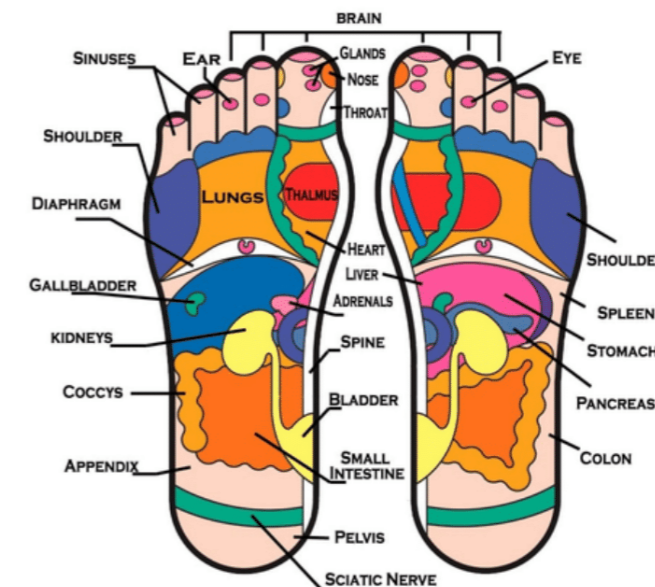
Chinese Herbal Products:

Chinese herbal products have been studied for many medical problems, including stroke, heart disease, mental disorders, and respiratory diseases. Some Chinese herbal formulas have been in use for more than 2,200 years! In traditional Chinese medicine, each herb has a different purpose or role, to help the body heal. For a plant to have been included in the Chinese apothecary, each of its parts had to be identified for a different healing purpose. Finally, traditional Chinese medicine also looked into the different healing properties of foods. They discovered that different foods carry different energies that can go directly to specific organs to help them heal!



Reflexology:

Reflexology is done on the smaller area of the hands, feet, ears and face. Today we will talk about foot reflexology. Foot reflexology is an ancient technique that involves applying pressure to specific points on the sole of the foot. People believe that these points mirror the organs, and that by applying pressure to them, it stimulates the organs and keeps the body balanced, once the body is balanced, it is thought; to heal itself. Some studies suggest that it may help reduce anxiety, ease fatigue, and lower blood pressure.



By Alaia Cadbury and Alicia Grispou Year 9

Aristotelian Award Essays

Congratulations to the following four Year 9 students who have each received commendations for their entries to the Aristotelian Award, a national research essay competition:

Charlotte André
Amelia Waring
Sara Davis
Jemima Gray



Is it right that someone can be prosecuted for something they didn't know was illegal?

BY CHARLOTTE ANDRÉ

The question of whether it is right for someone to be prosecuted for something they did not know was illegal is a complex one that has frequently been debated by legal scholars for centuries. On the one hand, some argue that it is morally wrong to bring someone to trial for committing a civil or criminal offence, without knowing it was illegal. On the other hand, others claim that ignorance of the law is no excuse, and that any individual who violates the constitution should be held accountable for their actions. The purpose of the law is to help keep countries in order. Without rules, the world would be in chaos. When you look at the regulations of developed countries around the world, it is presumed that a person of sound mind would know right from wrong; therefore, on that basis, they could be prosecuted for a crime.

From a moral perspective, it can be argued that holding people accountable for their actions, regardless of their knowledge, is a way to ensure that the law is being

followed. From a victim's point of view, it is fair that someone committing an offence should be prosecuted, even if they may not have known that their action was illegal. There should be sanctions for people's wrongdoing, as for instance, it would be difficult to believe that someone would genuinely claim they had no idea that stealing or drunk-driving was against the law.

Another argument in favour of prosecuting individuals who did not know their actions were illegal is that it serves as a deterrent to others who may be considering similar actions. The hope is that if people know that they can be held liable for something they did not know was illegal, they are more likely to be cautious and avoid committing crimes. Also, it would deter people from using the argument of ignorance in bad faith. Indeed, if people were able to use ignorance of the law as a defence, then anyone could claim they were unaware of the law in order to avoid being

condemned. This would jeopardise the very enforceability of the law. For example, if someone could get away with murdering their neighbour by arguing that they were not aware it was a crime to take someone's life, we would all be living in a very unsafe world that the constitution would not be able to protect. In essence, what is the point of having laws if anyone can place themselves above them by claiming they were unaware of them? Since we cannot let ignorance of the law be an argument to avoid prosecution, we must then make it a legal principle that no one should ignore the law.

Around 400 BCE, Aristotle himself came up with the now famous maxim: "Ignorantia iuris non excusat". This phrase means that a person generally cannot defend themselves from an action for which they are accused of, by saying that they were ignorant of the law. Indeed, it would be too easy for a person to break a contract, violate the privacy of their neighbours, or sell drugs if they could get away with it afterwards by pleading with their ignorance of the law. Many European countries with a tradition of Roman law rely on this legal principle. Aristotle even goes on to state "Ignorantia iuris nocet", which translates as "not knowing the law can be harmful". This quote inspired many other influential leaders such as Napoleon, who added this phrase into France's civil code in 1804. This further highlights the importance of this principle, which is one of the foundations of our constitutions.

However, there are valid counterarguments to this perspective. Our justice system requires all citizens to know the law, but this does not mean they all have to be legal experts. In fact, it would not be realistic, even for a lawyer, to have to know the thousands of laws and regulations that

exist by heart, as well as following their evolution.

Since it is hard to keep up with the law, we can then imagine situations where someone could be in a position to accidentally commit an offence because they were not aware about a change of law for instance. Even if a person has good intentions, they may disobey the law by not knowing that their action was illegal, which can easily happen in our justice system. In these kinds of situations, it seems fair to then turn our attention to the person's intent. To be held liable, an individual must have the motive to perpetrate a crime, according to the basic principle of criminal procedure. If someone did not know their actions were illegal, then they most likely did not intend to commit an offence, so holding them accountable could be seen as cruel. Except for certain criminal acts, the judge could therefore be less severe towards the person if they consider, when delivering the sentence, that they are sincere.

Furthermore, prosecuting someone for their behaviour that they were incognisant was illegal, can lead to harsh consequences. For example, if a person unknowingly violates a law that is not well-publicised or written, they may encounter severe penalties even if their actions were not nefarious. This is a form of over-criminalisation and can be argued to be unreasonable. In addition, someone may take precautions and receive some guidance about the law from officials to ensure they were not doing anything illegal. If they were to take some actions under the guidance of these law officials, and these actions turned out to be illegal, they could then base their defence in court on the misinformation they received.

This previous example is useful in demonstrating when individuals may

not have had the intention to commit an offence, but did so without knowing. Another example would be if someone sells narcotics while believing it to be sugar. They have made a mistake of fact, which means they committed an offence without intending to. This person would be prosecuted for their actions in most jurisdictions. However, one could argue that it would not be fair to prosecute someone in that situation. This circumstance can be qualified as a mistake of fact, which can be used by the judge to reduce a sentence.

To summarise, the question of whether it is right for someone to be prosecuted for something they were unaware was unlawful

is intricate and one with valid arguments on both sides. On the one hand, holding a person accountable for their actions, regardless of their knowledge, can act as a deterrent and ensure justice is served. On the other hand, it is unjust to prosecute an individual for something they were not informed was illegal, and criminalising actions that people were unaware were illegal can lead to oppressive consequences. Finally, whether it is right or wrong to prosecute someone for doing something they had no idea was illegal is debatable, but there is, in my opinion, a stronger case to advocate in favour of prosecuting. Ultimately, it will be up to the judge to decide on a fair sentence based on the facts on a case-by-case basis.

Is it right that someone can be prosecuted for something they didn't know was illegal?

BY SARA DAVIS

In addressing this question, one must first properly define its scope. It will not be the scope of this essay to venture into the epistemological world of knowledge. This essay will limit itself to a discussion on the 'rightness', or otherwise, of prosecuting someone for something one did not know was illegal rather than discussing how that someone came to 'know' anything at all. The essay will also not address the equally knotty problem of the level of severity of punishment for various crimes. With these limitations established, it is clear that to discuss the question, one must also define the word "right". This essay considers both a narrow and a broad definition. In the former, "right" can be considered to mean

simply 'correct' or 'not wrong'. That is to say correct in a factual sense. In the latter, the concept of "right" can be considered as 'just' or 'fair'. That is to say correct in a moral sense. The question presupposes that one lives in a legal structure (without this, one could never know something is 'illegal' as nothing would be 'illegal' in the first place). Moreover, in order for a legal system to be effective, there must exist consequences for non-performance. In other words, it must be possible to impose penalties on those who operate outside the system.

Formulating these premises, an argument therefore follows thus:

Premise 1: For something to be capable of being considered 'illegal', a legal system must exist.

Premise 2: In order to be effective, deviations from the proper operation of a legal system must have consequences.

Conclusion: It is correct that someone can be prosecuted for something they didn't know was illegal.

In the narrow sense of the word "right", it must be the case that prosecution for one's mistakes can occur even if there is a lack of knowledge of the law. The requirement for knowledge is not present in the formulation of either premise.

The broader, moral sense, of "right", i.e. "is it just/fair that someone can be prosecuted for something they didn't know was illegal", is a more complex question. John Rawls argues that approaching issues through a 'Veil of Ignorance' is the way one should assess morality. Employing this concept, one should imagine they sit behind a veil of ignorance that keeps them from knowing who they are or identifying with their personal circumstances. By being ignorant of one's circumstances, one can more objectively consider how societies should operate and therefore what is fair, just and moral, and what is not.

One can use Rawls's theory to approach the question of fairness regarding prosecution of actions that were not known to be illegal. Fairness, as many believe, being the essence and barometer of justice.

For example, the veil of ignorance would lead people to refuse slavery. Even though slavery is very convenient for slave-owners, for slaves that is not so much the case. Since behind the veil of ignorance one would not know whether one is a slave or a slave-owner, one would refuse slavery as a concept.

For the purposes of this essay, all illegal actions will be placed into one of two categories:

i) Action(s) whose undertaking result(s) in a victim (whether that victim is an individual, a group or the state itself). These actions will be called "victimising actions"; and

ii) Action(s) where there is/are no immediate, detectable consequence(s). These actions will be called "victimless actions".

In the case of victimising actions, since from behind the veil one would not know if one were the victim or the perpetrator of the action, one would refuse the victimising action itself. Accordingly, it would be fair and just to prosecute the perpetrator regardless of whether they knew the action was illegal since a society wishes to continue to operate within the boundaries of a legal system applied universally to its population. Turning to the second category of actions – victimless actions – it is harder to discern, through a veil of ignorance alone, whether one could come to a conclusion that the action was contrary to the best operation of a society since, though the action would have a perpetrator, it would not have a victim.

Take, as an example, the case of a driver running a red light on an empty, but well-lit, road at 3:00 am. Let it be assumed that the driver is neither driving under the influence of alcohol nor underage, and that the driver is on the correct side of the road. However, being new to the country, the driver believes that crossing the red light is allowed (in the driver's country of origin, to cross a junction at a red light after midnight is legal). On arriving in the new country, the driver is unaware that such action, though victimless, is illegal. Would it be fair to prosecute the driver?

One can turn to the German scholar Immanuel Kant for a lens through which to consider this example. Kant argues that moral reasoning should be based on rationality and the universality of laws, rather than consequences or intentions. Kant described a formulation of what he called his 'Categorical Imperative': that one must "act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law". According to this moral philosophy, whether an action is right or wrong is based solely on whether it is in accordance with the categorical imperative. Invoking this formulation, the driver should still be held responsible for his/her actions, because it is not reasonable to will that people should be able to commit crimes without consequence, just because they didn't know the act was illegal at the time. Kant would argue that individuals have a duty to know and obey the laws of the society in which they live. The driver in the example, on arriving in the country, should have read the Highway Code and familiarised him/herself with the laws regarding red lights. Legally, this is known as the "ignorantia juris non excusat", a principle that dates back to the time of the Bible, and means "ignorance of the law does not excuse". This is based on the idea that individuals have an ethical obligation to be informed about the laws that govern them, and that failure to do so is an indication of moral culpability. In this essay, it has been argued that there are two ways of interpreting the word "right":

- i) A narrow factual definition; and
- ii) A broader moral definition considering justness/fairness.

Further in the case of moral fairness, victimising and victimless actions have both been considered.

Factually, it appears trivially correct that it is right to prosecute someone for something even if it was not known to be

illegal. In considering the moral question, Rawls's veil of ignorance demonstrates that, on balance, a society would choose to prosecute unknowing perpetrators of illegal actions since it could be argued that allowing individuals to claim ignorance of the law would be unfair to victims. The perpetrators would not be held accountable for their actions and would not be punished accordingly. This could be seen as a form of injustice to the victims, their families and/or the state itself. Prosecuting the perpetrator therefore could be argued to be a justifiable 'lesser of two evils'.

In the case of victimless actions, Immanuel Kant shows us that it is beneficial for a society to have laws and to enforce them to maintain social order. Allowing individuals to claim ignorance of the law would undermine the effectiveness of the universality of a legal system and lead to the creation of a culture of lawlessness. A culture where people could engage in criminal behaviour, because they think they can get away with it, would not be a state of affairs that anyone would wish to be 'universal law'.

Though a much more complex question to answer through the lens of moral fairness than simply correctness, it remains the belief of this author that it is "right" that someone can be prosecuted for something they did not know was illegal. The alternative leads to a dystopian world in which living would be a nightmare. However, as highlighted at the outset, this leaves unanswered the question of degree of punishment which is another topic entirely – one could certainly argue that a custodial sentence in the UK for looking suspicious while handling fish, defacing a banknote or simply carrying a plank of wood down a road in London would be excessive!

To what extent were the outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic positive?

BY AMELIA WARING

Covid-19 is a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, with the first cases being reported from Wuhan City, China to the World Health Organisation on 31st December 2019. SARS-CoV-2 is thought by scientists to be zoonotic, meaning transferred from an animal to a human. The virus quickly spread throughout China and beyond, reaching the UK in late January 2020. The disease caused millions of deaths worldwide, targeting individuals over the age of 50. On 11th March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared a global pandemic.

On 23rd March 2020, the Prime Minister at the time, Boris Johnson, announced a nationwide lockdown to prevent further spread of Covid-19. During this time, people were forced to stay at home, and were only permitted to leave their houses to buy essential items like food, or for medical reasons. These lockdowns and rules continued for months after, stopping people from meeting loved ones, going to school/work, and enjoying life as they had done

previously. As a result, the outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic are mainly perceived to be negative, however it can be argued that there are some positive aspects to these outcomes as well.

Work and School

Firstly, some aspects of how school and work systems were run during the pandemic have lasted to this day. During the lockdowns, people were not allowed to leave their homes, yet education and work still had to continue. The way to solve the issue was to move everything online, with adults working from home and students attending online classes. This led to the popularisation of communication software, like Zoom, Skype, Discord and many others. To show this dramatic rise, Zoom users increased from 10 million before the pandemic to 200 million when the pandemic started in March 2020. This sudden switch to a more digital way of learning and working changed perspectives on how things are taught in schools, and how adults should work.

Something that has become popular since the pandemic is hybrid working, where somebody alternates between working in the office and working remotely. After a study in May 2021, it was discovered that 83% of people wanted to work remotely after the pandemic. This way of working might not have become so popular if the pandemic hadn't opened people's eyes to the possibility that remote work could be useful in day to day life, as it allows for more flexibility. This outcome is positive to the majority of people, creating a more balanced and flexible work life. For those who appreciate both being in office and working from home, hybrid working is the perfect compromise. However, this way of working could lead to people overworking, as it becomes hard to distinguish when to take a break, which is a significant negative.

Additionally, schools have become more digitalised since the pandemic as schools were forced to use technology to educate students. This digitalisation prompted a change because schools began to discover more learning software to aid the teaching of students, which continued even after online school was finished. In a survey, it was reported that there was over a 19% increase in the use of learning technology since the start of the pandemic. The pandemic triggered the breakthrough in technology usage in schools, and many schools came to the conclusion that such technology would help to simplify and improve learning. This is a fairly positive outcome because learning improved, and teaching became more simplified. Although there are some negative elements too, as children are introduced to technology at a younger age, which could cause younger children to become more frequently exposed to social media and other content not suitable for their age group.

Medicine and Healthcare

One of the most incredible feats during the Covid-19 pandemic was how quickly the vaccine was developed. Most vaccines take between 2-10 years to develop, but the first vaccine for Covid-19 was authorized for use less than a year after the first cases were reported. It is currently the fastest vaccine ever developed. The urgency to protect people from the virus largely increased the speed at which medicine was produced, and since then multiple Covid-19 vaccines and other advanced medicine have been created to protect people from disease.

An example is the use of mRNA, which was first tested on mice in 1990. It was then discovered that mRNA could be useful for vaccines to protect people against illnesses like cancer, however mRNA was unstable and would not be suitable for use unless someone figured out how to stabilise it. This research continued for years, but



scientists were always hesitant to use the mRNA, since the vaccines were not completely perfect. However, the urgency of the pandemic pushed them to work even harder to develop a suitable vaccine with mRNA. Soon after, Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine was approved for use, becoming the first vaccine with mRNA in it to be licensed for use. This was a scientific breakthrough, as the new vaccine proved to be 94% effective against the virus.

Since then, more mRNA vaccines have been licensed for use, and it is expected that these developments will improve medicine worldwide. This is a very positive outcome, as scientists now know that mRNA can work well against diseases, which will hopefully provoke further use against other diseases.

Travel

During the pandemic, there were many restrictions in the UK on where you could go and when to leave the house. Leaving the house for non-essential reasons was not permitted, so travelling, going out with friends, going to the cinema etc, were all banned. This restriction caused the travel and entertainment industry to suffer immensely during the pandemic, with Heathrow Airport recording their lowest number of passengers in nearly 50 years. Even after the pandemic had finished, and travelling to other countries was permitted, the percentage of passengers only reached 61% of what it was before the pandemic.

A reason for these low figures is that many people travelled abroad for business meetings and, after the pandemic, it became cheaper and more convenient to hold such meetings online instead. On the one hand, this is negative because the travel industry suffered a huge loss as a result of the pandemic, having lost 39% of their previous customers. On the other

hand, airplanes globally emit one billion tonnes of carbon dioxide every year, which contributes to climate change and global warming. It is therefore a huge positive that people are reducing the number of flights they take and finding alternatives, as it benefits the Earth.

Summary

In conclusion, the outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic left many in tough situations, and the pandemic affected many lives negatively. Many businesses suffered great losses, and mental health worsened. Yet, there is still something to be said for the positive side of these outcomes, like developments in technology, medicine and steps being taken to improve the world as we know it. The global pandemic was something that united the world; the speed at which scientists developed the vaccines for Covid-19, and how the NHS tirelessly worked to protect people from Covid-19, are prime examples of the determination, compassion and collaboration that people showed during that time. It is what others have managed to achieve to protect the vulnerable that I consider to be the biggest positive out of all the outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic, as it brings people together to appreciate and be thankful for those who worked to protect us and our loved ones.



History is the classification and investigation of past events. By studying history, you observe documents and understand different incidents in the past. A victor is usually shown as the person that defeats someone in a battle or event, the defeated person in the event is seen as the loser. The statement 'History is written by the victors' is often associated with Winston Churchill, but there is no documented moment when he said the quote. The closest instance was when military leader and convicted war criminal Herman Göring said 'Der Sieger wird immer der Richter und der Besiegte stets der Angeklagte sein' in the Nuremberg trials, which literally translates to 'the victor will always be the judge, and the vanquished the accused'.

The foundation of history are the documents that are found and analysed by historians. We would not know anything about the past if it was not for diaries, papers, logs, and other evidence. Throughout history, there has been an on-going trend that only the wealthy could afford an education, and even then, only the wealthy male population would be able to receive the education and learn how to read and write. As such, the documents that we will use to teach and learn about the past is only representing the wealthy point of view. Much of history involves recording different people's views and beliefs. The people

recorded are only being recorded because they are regarded as being significant enough to listen to. This predicament results in the majority of the population to be discarded and forgotten. In this context, the wealthy are the victors because they are able to write and create the documents that we study today.

Another phrase similar to 'History is written by the victors' is 'The right side of history'. The origin of this expression is unknown and is often used when describing the side that fought for the same views we have today. 'The right side of history' is a statement that both sides of history would use; in the moment, each side genuinely believes they are fighting for the good of their people and society. When this argument or fight is resolved, the winner is shown to be on the right side of history. When learning about an event in history, the winner is portrayed as the side fighting for the right cause and the loser is the one fighting for the wrong one, or the one different to the beliefs we have today. The Suffragettes were a group fighting for women to have the right to vote. The group used art, debates, propaganda, and attacks on property, which included window smashing and arson, to fight for their cause. Using the Suffragettes as an example, this group fighting for women's rights are painted in a good light as they ultimately succeeded in their cause, with

women eventually being given the right to vote. The government and politicians that fought against and tried to stop the Suffragettes are seen as morally wrong and presented as villains. However, if the people fighting against the Suffragettes had not won, and women did not receive the right to vote in 1928, and still do not receive the right to vote today, then the Suffragettes would have been shown as a radical group. The Suffragettes would have been seen as disruptors to society by the government and parliament who were fighting against them. This example shows that history is in fact written by the victors because the women's rights movement is written by the Suffragettes and the other groups campaigning for women's rights. Consequently, these groups are seen as the heroes.

'History is written by the victors' suggests that documents of historical importance were one sided and biased, implying a lack of information on the losing side. However, this lack of information is untrue, particularly when using the American revolution as an example, where at the end of the war Britain lost to America in the ultimate battle: The Siege of Yorktown . In my research about the revolution from the viewpoint of Britain, I found various documents from the British Online Archives detailing events from a British point of view. Documents included were pamphlets from 1765–66 about the new taxation on the British colonies in America and the unrest that followed this, and pamphlets of the years 1773–74 reflect on the tensions between America and Britain. Most of the British population at that time still did not think there would be a war. After 1779, newspapers and pamphlets took on a different tone as the writers and the public began to acknowledge that Britain was at war with America. This evidence is

proof that there are recorded documents preserved by the losing side. For the statement 'History is written by the victors' to be valid, there would have to be no information registered from the British side of the war.

Furthermore, in 1881, Jefferson Davis, American politician and first President of The Confederate States of America , published *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*. The book contains Davis's arguments on the constitutional and moral justification on the formation of the Confederate states of America and the American Civil War . This piece of literature further proves my point that there is no lack of information from the losing side of history, that the past is not biased in the information studied.

'History is written by the victors' is an old quote, yet is still used today. People often mention it very loosely and do not usually take the time to truly understand what it means. The phrase suggests some sort of bias towards the side of the victors, that there is an absence of information from the defeated. However, the word 'victor' is an overly broad term and can mean many different people all throughout history. The upper class of society tend not to be seen as victors, yet they were the ones who wrote the documents that we now use to figure out the past. After researching, I have come to the conclusion that history is indeed written by the victors, however the term 'victors' does not always mean the obvious winners. The term also means the ones with the advantage and the ones who are able to show future generations, like us, what happened.



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